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when other ministers were in office, that "Germinal" was at last produced at the Theatre du Cha'telet. It may be convenient to mention here that for some years subsequent to the publication of "Germinal" as a novel there was never a strike in France without some foolish and prejudiced journalists casting the blame on Zola and his hook. When in 1887 De*cazeville became the scene of some terrible disturbances, Zola was charged in many directions — even in the Chamber of Deputies "by some of its reactionary members— with the responsibility of those misfortunes. He disdained to reply to such ridiculous accusations; but it so happened that a few months previously (December 27, 1886) when authorising "Le Petit Eouennais" to publish "Germinal" serially, he had written the following prefatory note, in which he explained the book's real purport, which of course had never been doubtful for sensible minds:

"Germinal⁵ is a work of compassion, not a revolutionary work. In writing it my desire was to cry aloud to the happy ones of this world, to those who are the masters : 'Take heed 1 Look underground, observe all those unhappy beings toiling and suffering there. Perhaps there is still time to avoid a great catastrophe. But hasten, to act justly, for, otherwise, the peril is there: the earth will open, and the nations will be

swallowed up in one of the most frightful convulsions known to the world's history.'

" I descended into the hell of Labour, and if I concealed nothing, not even the degradation of that sphere, the shameful things engendered by misery and the huddling of human beings together as if they were mere cattle, it was because I wished the picture to be complete, with all its abominations, so as to draw tears from every eye at the spectacle of such a dolorous and pariah-like existence. Those things, no doubt, are not for young girls, hut family people should read me. All of you who work, read what I have written,